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CANADIANA



A MEMENTO.



'FIRST METHODIST CHURCH,
ST. CATHARINES.

1824.



1890.



Rev. J. Towell



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St Paul St.

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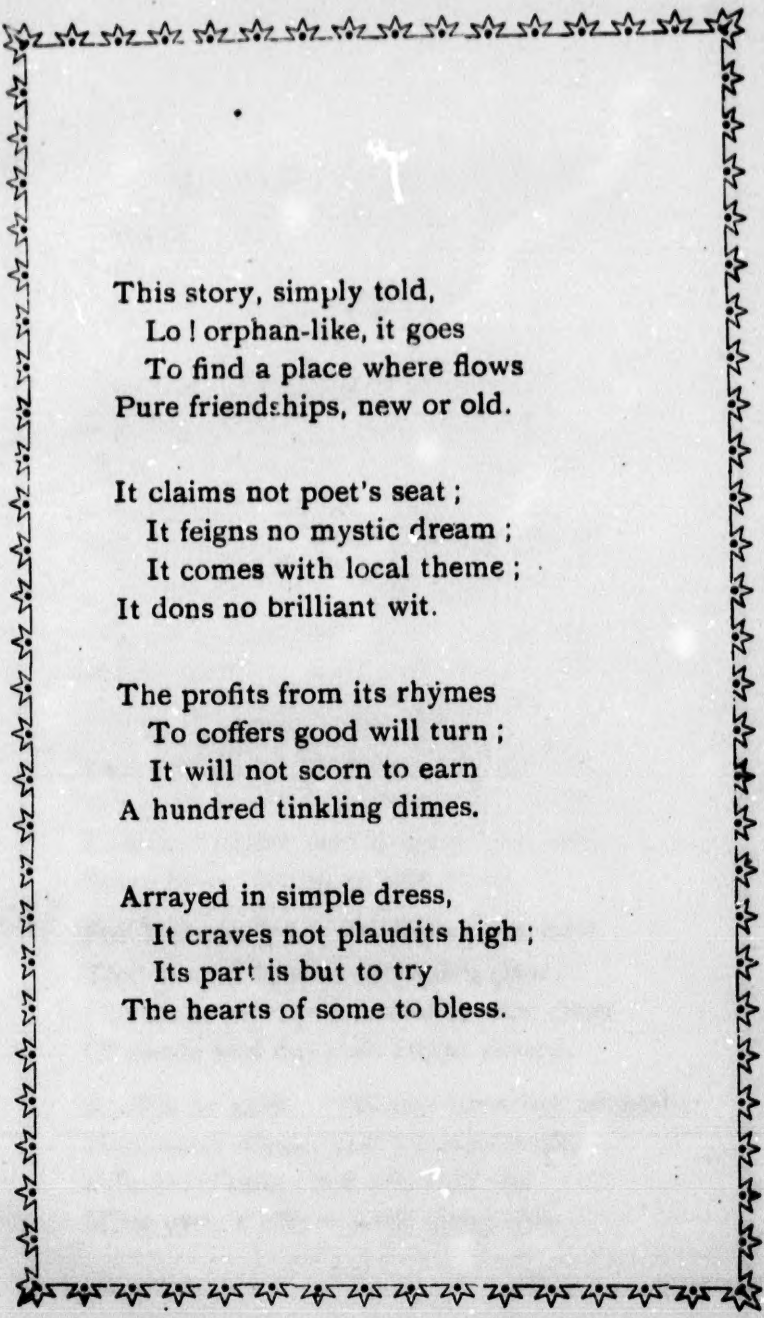
With compliments to
my esteemed Sister
in Christ - Mrs Dr Conney,
from
J. Lovell



*Inscribed as a tribute of
affection, to the members of
St. Paul Street Methodist
Church, by a near friend.*







This story, simply told,
Lo! orphan-like, it goes
To find a place where flows
Pure friendships, new or old.

It claims not poet's seat ;
It feigns no mystic dream ;
It comes with local theme ;
It dons no brilliant wit.

The profits from its rhymes
To coffers good will turn ;
It will not scorn to earn
A hundred tinkling dimes.

Arrayed in simple dress,
It craves not plaudits high ;
Its part is but to try
The hearts of some to bless.

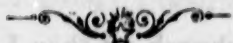
This is a very simple
to understand. It is
I find a place where I was
from friendship, now or old

It is not a good thing
to be in no more distant
in coming with each other
It does no better than

The people look at it
To make good will
It will not seem to be
A human looking thing

Arrived in simple dress
It seems not pleasant
The part is not to be
The heart of some to be

THE OLD FRAME CHURCH AND THE FRIENDS OF YORE.



Some time ago my feet were found
Standing on sacred, solemn ground ;
'Twas where stood once the time-worn
frame—

The dear old church of honored name.

Timbers of every rank and kind,
Lay littered 'round, swept by the wind ;
Old sleepers, sills and worn-out floors,
And rafters, posts and hingeless doors.

And near at hand an old man stood—
His gaze revealed a thoughtful mood—
To him I spoke, and begged him trace
Some facts related to this place.

For I would know the links once cast
That bound him to the olden past ;
His looks betrayed remembrance clear
Of deeds and days we ought revere.

At this he said: "While here my thought
Has taken wings, and I have sought
Effects to hide ; but you will see
Mine eyes e'erflow with sympathy.

" The long-gone past, its smiles and tears,
Comes back to me ; the early years
Are fresh e'en yet—'tis but a day
Since youth was mine, with song and play.

" To this old church oft then I strayed,
In simple homespun dress arrayed,
I went, but not to hear the Word—
My heart was like some swift-winged bird,

" Pray, chide me not. May motives less
Than those akin to holiness
Not guide young feet ? Is it a wrong
If love-dreams haunt when we are young ?

" Those whispers sweet ! I hear them still :
' Come through the wold, come past the
mill ;
The pathway take through clover fields,
And meet me when the Day King gilds

" ' The western sky with golden hue.
Yes, come ; and then we shall renew
Our pledges to each other given,
And enter church to learn of heaven.'

" I found in her a true helpmeet ;
She led me to the Saviour's feet ;
She taught me read the Book that tells
Of life that springs from living wells.

" That angel-form has passed away ;
And I am old. Around me play
Grandchildren now ; yet more and more
I dream of her gone on before.

" How time has flown ! Some five decades
Have added been (the rich green blades
Of fifty years have come and gone)
Since first I claimed her as my own.

" What joy we had in worship then !
The choir was led, you doubtless ken,
By Senior Gilleland, who yet
Can sing the hymns to notes well set.

" Were you not here the other night ?
To me it was a touching sight
To see the old man on the stand
With remnant of his singing band.

" And sang, with trembling voice and frame,
' All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name !'
My heart leaped up—forgive these tears ;
Again I lived the long-gone years.

" Bright faces, forms and friends of yore
I saw and knew, and heard them pour
Loud songs of praise, till my whole soul
Was moved almost beyond control.

" The rich-toned voice I seemed to hear
Of Henry Burgoyne, full and clear ;
And quivering thro' the ambient air
Came Richard Collier's words of prayer.

" The tend'rest memories awoke
Of Brothers Brownlee, Gardiner, Cook ;
And not the least among the blest
Was Lyman Parsons, long at rest.

" And then the Heralds of the Cross !
A company great—we felt the loss,
As, one by one, they left this field,
For other spheres new joys to yield.

" My mind recalls some of their names—
McCullough, Warner, Douse and Ames,
Taylor, Carroll, Howard, Brock,
Ryerson, Bevitt, Price and Clarke,

" Messmore, Cooney and James Musgrove,
R. W. Ferrier, crowned in love ;
Belton, Barber, Evans and Young,
Cladius Byrne, with silvery tongue ;

Ratray, Creighton and Sam'l Rose,
And others who sleep in sweet repose ;
We loved them then, and love them still ;
They taught us do the Father's will.

" In talents, gifts and pulpit fame ;
In manners, looks and christen'd name,
As varied they as gleaming stars,
Or as the flowers that Nature wears.

" Yet what of manner, voice or form !
'Tis truth men need in calm or storm—
A gift of heaven, a potent ray,
Dissolving darkness into day.

" Those men revered the sacred page ;
They told of bard, and saint, and sage,
Who, sailing, saw, o'er life's deep sea,
Bright shores of immortality.

" They told of gates that stood ajar,
Through which there swept the chariot car,
On which the King Celestial rode—
The lowly, lofty Son of God.

" They told of purpled streams that flowed ;
Of bright orbs that through storm-clouds
glowed ;
Of uplands, where the ancient seers
Now breathe the holier atmospheres.

" They told of waters crystal-clear ;
Of pastures green afar and near ;
Of pathways up through mountains high,
To thrones eternal in the sky.

" Your looks, my friend, reveal mistrust ;
You think this story surely must
Be rosy-hued—that paler shades
Would better suit the past decades.

" These spectacles, you seem to say,
Prismatic are. The olden day
Looks gorgeous ; all its mists and dews
Seem tinged with mellow rainbow hues.

" It may seem thus ; but living still
Are friends far down life's shadow'd hill.
To them give heed ; they'll tell you more
Than I, of ancient sacred lore."

This chance I seized, not that a shade
Of doubt I knew. I rather laid
My heart wide open to believe
It true ; and so I pray'd him give

The names of them who lived those years
(Ladies elect and aged seers)
Who still survive. I longed to know
The heroes of the long ago.

The list of names the old man gave,
Then turned, as if he meant to leave ;
I thanked him much, but begged him wait.
Some thoughts of future to relate.

" Old age," said he, " joys in old ties.
The past is golden in our eyes ;
Yet hear, and know, the present seems
Replete with more than splendid dreams.

" On pinions swift fair Progress flies
From her pavilion in the skies ;
Her mission pure, to teach all friends
The highway on to noblest ends.

" Her looks, great ardent hopes express ;
Her eye, aflame with earnestness ;
Her spirit, a resistless force ;
Her path, an ever onward course.

" Her touch makes oaks from acorns grow ;
Her breath lets loose the mountain snow ;
Her smile subdues the cruel sleet ;
Her hand waves back old winter's fleet ;

" Her word turns brass to finest gold ;
Her cities thrive where grew the wold ;
Her steamers ply where crept the sails
O'er waters swept by angry gales.

" She loves all Christian lands the most ;
Her arts in pagan worlds are lost ;
She walks with Freedom hand-in-hand ;
And truth is her great magic wand.

" Her laws are crystallized in domes,
In churches and benevolent homes.
The mart, the shop, the needed school,
Imbreathe the spirit of her rule.

" Divine in form, this angel fair
Has come on wings of mountain air
To bless ' St. Paul's ' with ardent hope,
Of growth majestic as the oak.

" An era new has reached its dawn.
To build is wise ; then misty morn
To cloudless noon shall grow apace,
And ' trains of glory ' fill the place.

" ' But times are dull,' the people cry.
To this the prophet gives reply :
Has not the Lord a promise given,
The doors to ope of yonder heaven,

" And blessings pour like floods of rain,
Till room be wanting to contain,
The rich supply ? Remember this :
The silver and the gold are His.

" But one condition we must prize,
Into the storehouse bring the tithes ;
Bring all the tithes, and breathe such pray-
ers

As shall ascend God's altar stairs.

" Then God will bless the church ; and more,
He'll bless the factory, field and store,
The school and home, the tree and vine—
Heaven's light on all shall brightly shine.

" My friend," the old man said, " good-bye !
The chilled air tells me night is nigh."
" Farewell !" I said ; " my heart beats warm
To meet again when comes the morn."

" Farewell !" he once again replied ;
" If not at morn, beyond the tide,
Let's strive to meet. My sight is dim—
My sun sets soon ; its upper rim

" Is scarcely seen. To-morrow I
May be beyond the vaulted sky.
The end draws near ; my work is o'er ;
My hopes reach ont to yon bright shore."

I watched those white locks pass the gate ;
Then sat me down to meditate :
Our days at best are but a span—
A hand-breadth here for mortal man.

And yet life built of worthy deeds
Deep meaning has. Men sow good seeds
To-day ; to-morrow's yield shall be
Ripe sheaves of immortality.

Though Time's strong hand works changes
great ;

Though shadows deep our steps await,
Let Valor lead, and Truth illumine,
And Hope her tireless pinions plume.

Nor let Faith droop ; for One all-wise
Dominion wields in earth and skies ;
And men should see in all that's wrought
The wisdom of Eternal thought.

J. J.

